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DEFORESTED AND TERRACED MOUNTAINS IN SHANSI PROVINCE, CHINA, NEAR THE CITY OF WU-TAI-SHAN. (Showing laborious methods necessary in order to produce crops from deforested slopes)

RESTORING CHINA'S FORESTS

A NEW AMERICAN INFLUENCE IN THE EMPIRE

BY THOMAS H. SIMPSON

IN the summer of 1910 an exposition held dations, with their accompaniments of pesticonsequences to the rest of the world.

utterly devoid of vegetation, so that the land its kind in the world. was subject to alternate droughts and inun- This desire and the efforts which pro-

in Nanking included among its features lence and famine. Any thoroughgoing atan athletic meet to which came the teams of tempt to remedy this situation, the visitor the twelve Christian colleges of China. These decided, would involve reforestation, and an young Chinese, with their fine physiques and extensive movement of this kind would have Occidental speech and manners, represented to be supported by the people,—a prelimithe most progressive element of the country. nary consideration which presented a difficult They were full of the spirit of the new obstacle. From the spectacle of the Chris-China,—which after centuries of inertia is tian students at the games, however, came beginning to stir a people of four hundred an idea: These educated young men could million souls to an awakening fraught with become the means of propagating the plan among the masses.

The American soldier was Major George AN AMERICAN SOLDIER-TOURIST SEES THE P. Ahern, U. S. A., at that time director of the Philippine Bureau of Forestry. Before Among the spectators was an American Gifford Pinchot had risen to prominence as soldier, who in traveling through China had the foremost conservationist in America, been impressed by the barren aspect of sec- Ahern had been preaching the doctrine in tions that were nevertheless teeming with the West; upon the occupation of the Philpeople. Save in the neighborhood of shrines ippines by the United States he introduced and temples, he had not seen a tree for hun- it to the Filipinos, and now he wanted to dreds of miles. Mud was the common spread it among a people whose suffering as building material, and grass and dried ma- the penalty of deforestation has long been nure the usual fuel. Watersheds were instanced as the most horrible example of

ceeded from it are largely responsible for the filled up with silt. Trees had to be imdevelopment of a new and important Ameri- ported and, to give them earth in which to can force in China. Under American influ- grow, soil actually had to be carried on ence and American methods one of China's men's backs from the ravines up to ledges most pressing and obvious problems is being and holes hewn in the solid rock, from which attacked, with excellent prospects of ultimate the humus had been washed away. Nearly success. And if the effort is of importance 600 tree species from all parts of the world to China, it is of much significance to were planted in the early experiments, be-America; for it means that, while Japan and fore suitable varieties were found. The first the European powers are jealously maneu-year many of the seedlings were killed by vering for political and commercial su-frost, the next by a plague of caterpillars, premacy in China, America is quietly ex- and it took three years to educate the inhabierting a beneficial force which is producing tants of the nearby villages to refrain from results that, being tangible, can be felt and pulling up the saplings for firewood as fast appreciated by those who are affected. It is as they were set down. one of the agencies which can relieve the ter- The conditions which the Germans had rible economic pressure under which China's to remedy in building their model colony in enormous population labors, the easing of Kiau-Chau exist practically throughout which is bound to hasten political and indus- China, except in the inaccessible mountain trial progress. Stirring restively to the call districts. The plains are treeless; in the of a new age, China is potentially one of the foothills occasional patches of shrubbery are great nations of the world. Her metamor- found where forests flourished less than a phosis necessarily must have an important century ago; in the mountains the work of relationship to the industrial and commercial cutting the last stands is going on. Wood expansion of other countries; and we can for structural purposes is almost prohibitive expect to benefit from the change just so in price, the product of the mountain forests much as we take part in it.

REFORESTING KIAU-CHAU: GERMANY'S ENERGY AND PATIENCE

prominent in Major Ahern's scheme. It was scrape the ground with iron hooks that leave not, however, wholly original with him. hardly a vestige of the humus necessary to The Germans were powerfully actuated by maintain the soil's fertility. it in Kiau-Chau, where the Chinese of today really first learned the value of forestry, as indicated by a report made two years ago by Herr Malte Haas, forestmeister of Kiau-Chau, on the example furnished by frequently in newspaper dispatches from the reforestation of the German territory: China in connection with Red Cross appeals

"that this work of Kultur, a work free of ditions; for they follow the alternate floods all political friction, could remain to be car- and droughts which are caused by deforestaried out under German influence, so that tion of the watersheds. The lack of domestic German thought and sentiment might be timber is a serious impediment to industry; propagated in the remotest confines of the and the fact that most of the rivers contain land.'

picion that the Far-Eastern seat of Kultur tation, and water power. was to fall after a spectacular siege into the rivers which contain water all the year round hands of the Japanese.

Kiau-Chau eighteen years ago the entire ter- for example, after forming in 1852 a new ritory was practically devoid of vegetation. mouth some 250 miles north of its old one, The hills, once covered with verdure, stood turned south again in 1886, devastating some out bare and jagged like the teeth of a saw, 25,000 square miles of one of the most thicktheir sides ravined and gullied by erosion, ly populated agricultural sections, and causfrom which harbor and roadstead were being ing a loss, according to Chinese accounts, of

being consumed mostly in the manufacture of coffins. Brush faggots and charcoal are luxuries for the wealthy. The farmers and villagers burn dried manure, grass, stubble This not entirely altruistic view was and roots, gathered by men and boys, who

FLOODS AND FAMINES CAUSED BY LACK OF FORESTS

Most of the famines which are mentioned "It was a great thing," wrote Herr Haas, for assistance are due indirectly to these conwater only during the rainy season precludes Evidently Herr Haas entertained no sus- the possibility of irrigation, cheap transpor-The few great overflow annually, destroying numberless When the Germans took possession of lives and untold property. The Hoang-Ho,

Auseven million lives. thenticated records show that at least two millions perished in this single inundation.

Naturally, then, the Chinese were impressed when they saw in Kiau-Chau the changes brought about by reforestation. The governors of several provinces sent officials to attend a course in forestry at Tsing-Tau and the central government at Peking employed a number of German foresters to formulate a system of forest management to be introduced throughout the country, a depart-ment of forestry being established with headquarters at Mukden, Manchuria.



BOTTOM LANDS BURIED IN WASTE FROM EROSION CAUSED BY DEFOR-ESTATION OF MOUNTAINS. WU-TAI-SHAN, SHANSI PROVINCE, CHINA

eral prominent Chinese. What was needed, got their education from America. the government service.

CHINESE STUDENTS INVITED TO THE PHILIP- two came in 1913, and three in 1914. PINE FORESTRY SCHOOL

seen at the Christian games.

Major Ahern appreciated the value of cies of the neighboring countries. Incidenthe Germans' work; but he felt that the tally, it is a pertinent fact, that whatever reforestation movement, in order to be truly prestige the United States enjoys in China, successful, should be furthered by the peo- despite the avid encroachments of England, ple themselves. With this in mind he Germany, Russia, and Japan, and our own called on United States Minister Calhoun at lethargic diplomacy, is quite generally at-Peking and arranged a conference with sev- tributed to the influence of the students who

he told them, was a popular educational cam- So Major Ahern wrote to the American paign, and this, he insisted, must be carried consul-general at Shanghai, asking to be put on mostly by Chinese; for it is the universal in touch with the leading American colleges experience that such a public reform must in China, with a view to placing a limited proceed from the people. In the United States, number of Chinese students in the Philipfor instance, the West swallowed hard on pine forest school at Los Baños. He then conservation when it came from the lips of broached the subject to the Famine Relief Easterners, but it spread more easily when ex- Committee at Shanghai and the Chinese pounded by native sons educated in the East Chamber of Commerce at Manila. These and sent back as rangers and supervisors in bodies gladly agreed to share the expenses of the students. The first Chinese student arrived at Los Baños in the spring of 1912;

In casting about now for a means of intro-His hearers were unanimous in assent; ducing his plan into China itself, Major but none of them was able to suggest a solu- Ahern learned that a progressive young Chition. In fact, the problem seemed unsolva- nese named Ngan Han, who was an alumnus ble until, after the Nanking exposition, when of the American college at Nanking and had Major Ahern had returned to Manila, his taken a post-graduate course in forestry at idea crystallized into this: If he could not Ann Arbor, Michigan, had become head of start a popular reforestation movement in the Department of Forestry in Peking. At China, he could at least start it in the Phil- Ahern's invitation, Han visited the Philipippines with Chinese students such as he had pines in the spring of 1914 and spent three months in office and field studying the Amer-The advantage of this plan struck the ican's methods. Upon his return to China Philippine University board of regents as ob- he used the Philippine forestry regulations vious; for the future of the islands is inti- for a pattern upon which to draft a new mately connected with the interests and poli-code to be promulgated by President Yuan

Shi-kai. Just about this time Major Ahern received from the University of Nanking a utes, until the spokesman remarked, "The request for information as to the records of foreigner isn't far astray," and they went the Chinese students at Los Baños. In his away satisfied. reply he took occasion to urge the establishment of a forest school at Nanking, suggest- that the Chinese government gave the assoing possible sources of funds, proffering the ciation an addition of ten thousand acres on assistance of himself and his associates, and Purple Mountain. Inasmuch as most of this pointing out that instructors could be ob- area-could not be cultivated, Professor Bailie tained among the Chinese who would soon planted it with trees, in patches of forty to be graduated from Los Baños.

A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENT AT NANKING by refugees.

In the meantime, an American missionary named Joseph Bailie, Professor of Agriculture in Nanking University, unconsciously cal inundations, but this time with more than The University board of managers seized long the storm center of wars and famines, rapid interchange of letters between Manila, developing the slopes of Purple Mountain, a mittee had provided for three scholarships formed, supported mainly by wealthy Chinese, tung, and experts from the Philippine Buwas made with a thousand-acre tract.

even that much was literally covered with German Forest School in Kiau-Chau, which grave mounds, which are a difficult problem was discontinued at the outbreak of the war. throughout China on account of the lack of Each student receives under his scholarship regulated cemeteries and the people's super- for tuition and maintenance seven hundred stitious fear of disturbing the dead. Pro- Chinese dollars to cover the entire course of fessor Bailie knew that he would have to four years. Technical instruction in forestry break through an age-old barrier of supersti- will not be given until the students have the coffins. Most of the graves were so old of English, as there are practically no textas to contain no longer any trace of their books on the subject in Chinese. erstwhile occupants. Just as Professor Bailie. The American innovation already has proexpected, however, the "gentry" of the neigh- duced a profound effect, the central governborhood foregathered to protest this desecra- ment and the provinces as well all evincing tion of their ancestors' resting-places, and intentions to foster the movement throughsent a delegation to see him.

not need so much land, whereas the hun-terned after the custom in the United States; dreds of living employed in breaking up the and recently an American, W. F. Sherfessee, land would otherwise die of hunger. Be- who succeeded Major Ahern as head of the sides, he pointed out, most of the graves were Philippine Bureau of Forestry, signed a conempty and ownerless, but wherever a corpse tract with the Chinese Government to act was found, it was boxed up respectfully and in an advisory capacity to the director of its reinterred where it could be easily located. rapidly growing Forest Service.

The deputation pondered for a few min-

The colonization plan was so successful fifty acres. Between the patches wide firebreaks were established, cultivated as "farms"

A CHINESE FOREST SCHOOL STARTED

Thus the necessary field adjunct of a forhad been paving the way. Six years ago the est school was all prepared, as it were, when Hwai River surged up in one of its periodi- Major Ahern's letter reached Nankings ordinary severity. The city of Nanking, upon the suggestion eagerly, and after a became overrun by a countless horde of des- Shanghai, and Nanking, the forest school titute, starving refugees, who died like flies. was instituted on March 15 last. Ngan Han Thousands of them besieged the University had obtained for the school a government for relief, and Professor Bailie, who took appropriation of \$3000 and, at Major charge of this work, conceived the idea of Ahern's solicitation, the Famine Relief Comtall peak overlooking the city, so as to fur- and the maintenance of a Chinese graduate nish permanent homes and a livelihood to of Los Baños as instructor; five scholarships the refugees. To this end a local branch of were given by the Governor of Anhwei, and the Chinese Colonization Association was an equal number by the Governor of Shanand directed by Professor Bailie. A start reau of Forestry helped to organize the course of study. Seventeen students began Only a part of the land was tillable, and the course, six of whom had attended the tion; but he ordered his workmen to exhume completed eighteen months of intensive study

out the country. The Peking government Professor Bailie argued that the dead did has even established a national arbor day, pat-